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ENOUGH! INDIA HOLDS UP A MIRROR TO TRUMP'S HYPOCRISY

JAYANTH JACOB & DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

IN a strong rebuttal to renewed US criticism on India's trade with Russia, New Delhi on Monday accused Washington and its allies of "unjustified and unreasonable" targeting, reminding them that it was the United States itself that once encouraged those very purchases to stabilise global markets.

Ruling out any rethink on its energy trade with Russia, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated: "Like any major economy, India will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security."

The sharp message came minutes after US President Donald Trump threatened to 'substantially' raise tariffs to punish India for its purchase and resale of Russian oil. Trump's statement posted on Truth Social on Monday, said: "India is not only buying massive amounts of Russian Oil... they are selling it for big profits. They don't care how many people in Ukraine are being killed by the Russian War Machine... I will be substantially raising the tariff paid by India to the USA."

In its blistering response, India made it clear that such rhetoric smacks of geopolitical hypocrisy. "India has been targeted by the United States and the European Union for importing oil from Russia after the commencement of the Ukraine conflict," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal. "But in fact, India began importing from Russia because traditional supplies were diverted to Europe. The US at that time actively encouraged such imports to strengthen global energy market stability."

TARIFF TRACKER

Jaiswal's message was loud and clear that India will not be lectured. "India's imports are meant to ensure predictable and affordable energy costs to the Indian consumer. They are a necessity compelled by global market realities... However, it is revealing that the very nations criticising India are themselves indulging in trade with Russia... Such trade is not even a vital national compulsion."

India listed hard numbers to underscore the double standards. The EU in 2024 had a bilateral trade of Euro 67.5 billion in goods with Russia. It had trade in services estimated at Euro 17.2 billion in 2023. This is significantly more than India's total trade with Russia that year or subsequently. European imports of LNG in 2024 reached a record 16.5 million tonnes, surpassing the previous record of 15.21 million tonnes in 2022.

Trump's snooty remarks evoked a sharp reaction from Russia as well. "Washington is unable to accept the erosion of its dominance in an emerging multipolar international order... No tariff wars or sanctions can halt the natural course of history," said Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova, spokesperson of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

US continues to import uranium hexafluoride, palladium, fertilizers and chemicals from Russia. The targeting of India is unjustified and unreasonable. Like any major economy, India will take all measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security
— External Affairs Ministry

India is not only buying massive amounts of Russian Oil... they are selling it for big profits... They don't care how many people in Ukraine are being killed by the Russian War Machine. Because of this, I will be substantially raising the Tariff paid by India to the USA
— Donald Trump

India celebrate England's Jamie Overtone wicket in the fifth and final Test on Monday. Captain Shubman Gill (right) with the Player of the Series medal. Mohammed Siraj was adjudged Player of the Match | AP

SIRAJMATAZZ INDIA

OVAL AND OUT WITH HEAD HELD HIGH

TNIE in England
FIROZ MIRZA
@LONDON

THE Oval match was the story of the series. It reflected the ferocity with which it was fought. First Test, England win comfortably. India return the favour with same magnanimity. Third Test, England win but with quite an effort. India draw despite trailing by 311 runs in the fourth. It would have been a travesty for cricket had the last not gone to the wire. India won by the barest of margins — six runs. Series 2-2.

The celebration in the middle was wild. It's poetic that after carrying the burden of bowling in the series, Mohammed Siraj took the final wicket and finished with a fifer (four in first innings and 23 overall). There he stood celebrating like his football idol Cristiano Ronaldo. He admitted how he changed the wallpaper on his phone on Monday morning to inspire him on the field.

The conditions early on favoured pacers and Siraj was right on the money. With only 35 runs to get, margin of error was thin. The crowd, like in all days thronged the stadium to witness one of cricket's most enthralling finishes. India did not disappoint, either. Siraj in beginning of the series was in the shadow of Jasprit Bumrah. As a batter, he was the last to fall in the third Test at Lord's.

On Monday, he was the architect of a historic win. A lot was at stake for the two incredibly talented sides. No series has seen so many ups and downs or twists and turns as this one. If Harry Brook and Joe Root were regaling the audience with their artistry, Siraj enthralled with 25 deliveries he bowled out of 53. He had taken three out of four wickets that fell. And, of course, the adage of frontline bowler for India will be his to keep. As for now, it's Oval and out. P17

TALKS FAIL

Transport staff to go on strike across K'taka from today

AKNISREE KARTHIK @Bengaluru

BUSES run by state transport corporations will stay off roads from 6 am on Tuesday, as corporation employees decided to go ahead with their indefinite strike after talks with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah failed on Monday. Though the state government is roping in private vehicles to minimise impact on travellers, the strike will still inconvenience lakhs of commuters as the operation of thousands of state-operated buses across Karnataka and outside will be affected.

Though the Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of Trade Unions of KSRTC, led by AITUC-affiliated KSRTC Staff and Workers' Federation, to put on hold the proposed indefinite strike from August 5 for a day, the JAC said it received the HC writ petition and order copy only by 7.30 pm and all the members of the JAC were not available for discussion and decision. "We have submitted the writ petition for legal opinion and will decide on Tuesday. The strike will start as announced," Federation General Secretary Vijaya Bhaskar said.

The JAC, which consists of trade unions of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), North Western Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) and Kalyana Karnataka West Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC), had called for an indefinite strike seeking implementation of many of their demands. The major demands include 25% pay hike with effect from January 1, 2024, settlement of pending salary arrears for 38 months (January 1, 2020, to February 28, 2023) and wage revision. P7

HC ORDERS UNIONS TO PUT STRIKE ON HOLD

The Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the Joint Action Committee of Trade Unions of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) Employees to put on hold the proposed indefinite strike for a day | P7

SIT finds human bones near site No 11

DIVYA CUTINHO @ Mangaluru

THE Special Investigation Team (SIT), which is exhuming alleged burial sites shown by the witness-complainant in the Dharmasthala mass burial case, found human skeletal remains close to an alleged burial site on Monday.

The SIT officials and the complainant entered the forested area on the highway side of Dharmasthala village on Monday to resume exhumation at Site No. 11 around 11 am.

Before the exhumation started, the complainant told the officials that he will show a fresh spot and while they were on their way, they found the human remains under a tree. A skull, a few bones, a rib and a knotted saree were found around 80 metres away from the Site No. 11, said an officer associated with SIT, requesting anonymity. The mysterious death could have occurred recently, and the remains will be sent for forensic analysis to determine the exact cause of death, sources said.

Meanwhile, Jayanth, an activist and a resident of Ichilampady in Belthangady taluk, filed a complaint with the Dharmasthala police. Jayanth had visited the SIT office in Belthangady on Saturday to file a complaint and submit details of a mysterious death of a teenage girl that happened over 15 years ago. He had alleged that the girl's body, found in a decomposed state, was buried without any legal procedures.

Dakshina Kannada SP Dr Arun K said Jayanth was told to file his complaint at the Dharmasthala police station. Necessary action would be taken, he added.

An unnatural death (UDR) case will be registered in this regard, a police officer said.

SC's 'true Indian' barb at Rahul

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Monday castigated Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his comments on China capturing Indian territory in the wake of the Galwan attack in 2020, adding if he was a "true Indian", he wouldn't have said it.

"How do you (Rahul) get to know when 2000 sq km was acquired by China? What is the credible material? A true Indian will not say this. When there is a conflict across border, can you say all this? Why can't you ask the question in Parliament?" asked a bench comprising justices Dipankar Datta and Augustine George Masih.

The court, however, stayed further proceedings against him in a defamation case in Lucknow and fixed the matter for further hearing after three weeks. During the hearing, Justice Datta said, "just because you have 19(1)(a) you cannot say anything."

Singhvi: It was about suppression on info

Singhvi said that Rahul was only on the point of proper disclosure and raising concerns about the suppression of information

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Rahul, said: "If he can't say these things which are published in the Press, he can't be a leader of opposition... It is also possible that a true Indian will say that our 20 Indian soldiers were beaten up and killed and that it is a matter of concern."

The defamation complaint filed by Uday Shankar Srivastava, the former Border Roads Organisation (BRO) director, was pending in a Lucknow court. His petition said Rahul made the 'derogatory' remarks was on December 16, 2022, during his Bharat Jodo Yatra.

In May, the Allahabad High Court had rejected Rahul's plea challenging the issuance of summons by an MP/ MLA court in Lucknow. The court said that freedom of speech and expression does not include the freedom to make statements defamatory to the Indian Army.

In its pushback later in the day, the Congress said every patriotic Indian has sought answers on China since the 2020 Galwan incident, adding the Centre has chosen to obfuscate and hide the truth with its policy of "DDLJ—deny, distract, lie, and justify."

CM gets SC quota report, cabinet to discuss on Aug 7

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

JUSTICE (retd) HN Nagamohan Das submitted his report on sub-classification of reservation for Scheduled Castes (SC) to the state government on Monday. The report will be placed before the cabinet on August 7 to decide on its implementation, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah told reporters after receiving the report. Rubbishing controversies surrounding the SC caste survey by the commission, he said there were no issues with the survey.

The report is 1,766-page long and includes the survey data and analysis with six recommendations. Justice Das' suggestions include division of 17% quota for internal reservation among 101 castes by classifying them as ABCD groups, within SCs.

"I was asked to submit a report on internal reservation under my chairmanship. We conducted the survey for 60 days by using a mobile app. Over 27 lakh Scheduled Caste families have been covered. Everything has been verified and the report submitted. It is now the property of the government. It is up to the government to accept or reject it," Justice Das told reporters after submitting the report at Vidhana Soudha.

The communities that participated in the survey are anxiously waiting to know their population and the quantum of reservation recommended for them. P4

Justice HN Nagamohan Das submits the SC quota report to CM Siddaramaiah in Bengaluru on Monday. Ministers Dr G Parameshwara, Dr H C Mahadevappa and K H Muniyappa as well as Chief Secretary Dr Shalini Rajneesh look on | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

EXPRESS READ

Cong stir against 'poll fraud' pushed to Aug 8

Bengaluru: The Congress' August 5 protest in Bengaluru over alleged electoral fraud has now been deferred to August 8 following the death of former Jharkhand CM Shibu Soren | P4

5 retired cops get life term in encounter case

Chandigarh: A special CBI court on Monday sentenced five retired Punjab Police officials, including a former DSP, to life imprisonment in a 32-year-old fake encounter case | P10

11-year-old boy poured pesticide into water tank

Shivamogga: Police have identified an 11-year-old boy for mixing pesticide into the water tank of his school in Hosanagara taluk. The police cracked the case after questioning several students | P3

JAN 11, 1944-AUG 4, 2025

Shibu Soren and the soil-soaked struggle for self-rule

V V P SHARMA @ New Delhi

SHIBU Soren was an avatar to the Santhals of the Chhotanagpur plateau of the undivided Bihar.

They called him Dishom Guru — the god of all 10 directions. In his younger days, his black locks, flowing beard and chiselled features mesmerised the tribals as much as they frustrated the Bihar Police, as he led a movement for tribal rights that saw a separate tribal state of Jharkhand carved from Bihar in his lifetime.

At 81, Soren breathed his last in Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in the national capital from kidney complications on Monday.

Called Guruji by now, he became chief minister thrice, never able to complete a full term as politics or police cases disrupted his reign.

He even went to Delhi as minister at the Centre, but as the years dragged on, and the health taking its toll, he hung up his boots and, succumbing to dynasty politics, handed over control of the party he cofounded, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), to his son, Hemant. The younger Soren is the current chief minister of a coalition with the Congress.

Shibu Soren's legacy is inseparable from the struggle for tribal rights in undivided Bihar. A Santhal, he grew up in an oppressive environment where politicians, landlords and usurers milked tribals of their dignity and displaced them from their hereditary forest dwellings, reducing them to literal slavery.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays respects to Shibu Soren in New Delhi on Monday | PTI

The angry young man decided to rebel and become the prophet of tribal identity. His target was the "diku", an outsider in the tribal language. That could mean any of the many oppressors. His demand was for 'jal, jungle, zameen', water, forest, land, which the tribals considered their god-given resources.

The movement he birthed thus arose from generations of exploitation, dispossession and deprivation of tribals — he preferred 'adivasis' — till in the early 1970s it turned into a political struggle under the banner of the JMM. It was headquartered in the hundreds of tribal villages, the tribal councils deciding agitational agendas, the Santhali folk songs arousing political passions.

Soren nurtured the movement across the land. He would move from village to village on foot. He had nothing he could call his own except the clothes and *chappals* he wore.

The villagers fed him, listened to him, and obeyed him blindly. He would explain to them facts of life they felt but could not express.

CONTINUED ON: P10